

REMARKS

The claims have not been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-12 are pending in the application, of which claims 1 and 12 are independent.

In view of the following Remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending rejections for the reasons discussed below.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

To establish an obviousness rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), four factual inquiries must be examined. The four factual inquiries include (a) determining the scope and contents of the prior art; (b) ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims in issue; (c) resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art; and (d) evaluating evidence of secondary consideration. *Graham v. John Deere*, 383 U.S. 1, 17-18 (1966). In view of these four factors, the analysis supporting a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) should be made explicit, and should “identify a reason that would have prompted a person of ordinary skill in the relevant field to combine the [prior art] elements” in the manner claimed. *KSR Int’l. Co. v. Teleflex, Inc.*, 550 U.S. ___, slip op. at 14-15 (2007). Thus, even if the prior art may be combined, the references when combined must disclose or suggest all of the claim limitations. *See in re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

Claims 1-3 and 8-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,262,699, issued to Suzuki, *et al.* (“Suzuki”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,525,486, issued to Awamoto, *et al.* (“Awamoto”), and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,212,178, issued to Ishii, *et al.* (“Ishii”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Suzuki, Awamoto, and Ishii, even if combined, fail to disclose or suggest all of the features of claim 1. Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*:

wherein ... in a mixed address-display period of one subfield, a first XY electrode pair group is addressed and sustain-discharged by a first driving circuit before a second XY electrode pair group is addressed by a second driving circuit, and both the first XY electrode pair group and the second XY electrode pair group are sustain-discharged after the second XY electrode pair group is addressed.

Even if combined, Suzuki, Awamoto, and Ishii fail to disclose or suggest at least these features. As the examiner concedes on page 3 of the Office Action, Suzuki and Awamoto fail to disclose or suggest "a mixed address-display period." The examiner turns to Ishii for this feature. Specifically, the examiner looks to Ishii's Fig. 6 to disclose that "a first XY electrode pair group is addressed and sustain-discharged by a first driving circuit before a second XY electrode pair group is addressed by a second driving circuit." Applicants disagree.

As shown in Ishii's Fig. 6, each sub-field includes its own separate address period T_a and its own separate display period T_d . Ishii also discloses that "with an address period T_{aA} , T_{aB} , ... T_{aH} of 10 μs and a display cycle period T_{dc} of 4 μs , display pulses of group E are shifted by 4 address periods of 10 μs , so in total by 40 μs with respect to the display pulses of group A" (col. 6, lines 26-30). Thus, Ishii teaches shifting the start of the subfields. This is not "a mixed address-display period of one subfield."

The Office Action incorrectly concludes that these features are shown in Figure 6 with regard to electrodes A1-A30 and B1-B30. Claim 1 recites "in a mixed address-display period of one subfield." And Figure 6 shows, for example, that electrodes B1-B30 are addressed immediately after electrodes A1-A30. Thus, for at least this reason, the Office Action incorrectly concludes that Ishii teaches "a first XY electrode pair group is addressed and sustain-discharged by a first driving circuit before a second XY electrode pair group is addressed by a second driving circuit."

Hence, Ishii fails to disclose "a first XY electrode pair group is addressed and sustain-discharged by a first driving circuit before a second XY electrode pair group is addressed by a second driving circuit, and both the first XY electrode pair group and the second XY electrode pair group are sustain-discharged after the second XY electrode pair group is addressed."

For at least these reasons, claim 1 is allowable over Suzuki in view of Awamoto, and further in view of Ishii.

Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0057858, applied for by Lee, *et al.* ("Lee") in view of Suzuki, in view of Awamoto, in further view of Ishii. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

As noted above with respect to claim 1, Suzuki in view of Awamoto, and further in view of Ishii fail to disclose or suggest "a mixed address-display period of one subfield." Further, Lee discloses an address-display separation display method and an address-while-display driving method (see Lee, Fig. 3; Fig. 4), but also fails to disclose "a mixed address-display period of one subfield." Thus, Lee fails to disclose or suggest the shortcomings of Suzuki in view of Awamoto, further in view of Ishii.

For at least these reasons, claim 12 is allowable over Lee in view of Suzuki, in view of Awamoto, further in view of Ishii.

Claims 4-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Suzuki in view of Awamoto and Ishii, further in view of Lee. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Applicants submit that claim 1 is allowable over Suzuki in view of Awamoto and Ishii. Lee fails to cure the deficiencies of Suzuki in view of Awamoto and Ishii noted above with regard

to claim 1. Hence, claims 4-7 are allowable at least because they depend from an allowable claim 1.

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Suzuki in view of Awamoto and Ishii, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,091,380 issued to Hashimoto, *et al.* ("Hashimoto"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Applicants submit that claim 1 is allowable over Suzuki in view of Awamoto and Ishii. Hashimoto fails to cure the deficiencies of Suzuki in view of Awamoto and Ishii noted above with regard to claim 1. Hence, claim 11 is allowable at least because it depends from an allowable claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claims 1 and 12. Claims 2-11 depend from claim 1 and are allowable at least for this reason. Since the other prior art of record, whether taken alone or in any combination, does not disclose or suggest all the features of the claimed invention, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 12, and all the claims that depend therefrom, are allowable.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the pending Office Action and respectfully submit that all of the stated grounds for rejection have been overcome or rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number below to expedite prosecution.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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